



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY 8

Report for:	Finance and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	8th November 2016
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter 2 Performance Report – Legal Governance and Democratic Services
Contact:	<p>Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers:</p> <p>Mark Brookes (Solicitor to the Council)</p> <p>Jim Doyle, Group Manager (Democratic Services)</p>
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with the performance report for quarter two in relation to Legal Governance and Democratic Services.
Recommendations	That Members note the report.
Corporate objectives:	Resources and Value For Money; Optimise Resources and Implement Best Practice.
Implications:	<u>Financial</u>
	None.
'Value For Money Implications'	<p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>Monitoring Performance supports the Council in achieving Value for Money for its citizens.</p>
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment completed for each service area as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.
Equalities	Equality Impact Assessment completed for each service area

Implications	as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.
Health And Safety Implications	None
Consultees:	Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services
Background papers:	Annex 1: Quarter 2 Performance Report Annex 2: Quarter 2 Operational Risk Register

- Members will find attached to this report the Corvu performance data for Legal Governance and Democratic Services, together with the Operational Risk Register, in relation to quarter 2 of 2016/17.

LEGAL GOVERNANCE

Legal Services

- The Legal team frequently represent the Council in the courts and tribunals, leading on injunctions, prosecutions and defending employment tribunal cases. In the last quarter the Legal team were successful in the following court cases :-
 - S Gallagher (Berkhamsted West ward) - S.204 Housing Act 1996 appeal. Ms G was arguing that the property we allocated to her after her homelessness application was unsuitable. The judge found that we had acted on the evidence provided and could not be criticised.
 - J Lee Lill (Berkhamsted West ward) – Closure Order– allegations of drug use and noise nuisance at property owned and managed by Affinity Sutton. Action taken on their behalf.
 - A Webb Watson (Adeyfield East ward) – Closure Order – allegations of drug dealing and drug use. Police raided the council address and found evidence of property being used to supply drugs.
 - M Horsfall (Aldbury & Wiggington ward) – Injunction – allegations of verbally and physically abusing his elderly father. He was given a final warning in writing before action was taken.
 - M Kmiotek (Highfield ward) – Closure Order
- The property and planning section of the team are dealing with a particularly high volume of casework presently, which consists of a mixture of new leases, licenses, deeds of variation and general advice. In the last quarter alone they received 57 new instructions and a further 25 Right to Buy applications to process.

Service improvements

4. The Legal team have been working on a quarterly intranet legal update page which will aim to keep internal departments up to date with relevant statutory and case law changes. This will go live in November.

The Licensing Team

5. The Licensing team have been reviewing the provision of taxi- ranks within Hemel Hempstead to ensure that there is adequate provision situated appropriately throughout the town centre. It is proposed to introduce a new night-time (2200-0600) rank for 5 taxis outside 89 to 95 Marlowes (Royal Bank of Scotland to A-Plan Insurance). This rank is aimed at facilitating the effective dispersal of persons frequenting the town's night time venues which should help prevent anti-social behaviour. The rank appointment is currently going through the Portfolio Holder Decision process.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Elections/Electoral Registration

6. The first two phases of the annual canvass to update and compile the Electoral Register for 2017 have been conducted throughout this quarter. These phases, based on elector responses, have progressed well, with a return rate around the 85% mark (about 30% of this in e-responses). This year, responders could provide more than just 'no changes' electronically and this has led to fewer paper returns, decreased scanning, and reduced processing time.
The final stage of 'door knocking' to encourage those who have not yet responded will commence on 26 October.
Going on past data and return rates, we are currently on target to achieve a canvass in the high 90% as usual.
7. There were two by-elections during the quarter: an election of a Parish Councillor for Flamstead Parish Council and election to fill the Adeyfield West, Dacorum Borough councillor vacancy. Both of these were conducted successfully.

Member Support Services

8. During Quarter 2, Member Support managed and organised the following:
 - Published 21 agendas
 - Completed 21 sets of minutes
 - Spent 36 hours at evening meetings
 - Processed 55 public speakers at Committee
 - Published 7 Portfolio Holder Decisions
 - Published 15 Officer Decisions
 - Representation at 7 Community Association meetings
 - 3 High Sheriff Tours and 1 Planning Meeting
 - 4 Mayoral visits to parishes including Nash Mills and Flaunden

- Deputy Lieutenant tour
9. Work and training is still ongoing in order to further develop the use of Modern.Gov, Issue Manager. Officer Decisions are now carried out using the system and the process is working well. Further testing of its use for Officer Decisions and Portfolio Holder Decisions is ongoing and protocols for their production are being developed.

Member Development

10. Four Member Development sessions took place during this quarter, with 40 attendances which equates to 0.78 average per councillor. Sessions included Safeguarding & WRAP, Planning Committee Members Update, Effective Member Officer Partnerships, and Condensation and Damp Training; all provided as a result of the member requests following the Personal Development Plans or were deemed appropriate/compulsory by the Member Development Steering Group.
11. During this quarter the following attendances were seen:
- 24 councillors did not attend any of the courses provided
 - 17 councillors attended 1 course
 - 8 councillors attended 2 courses
 - 2 councillors attended 3 courses
 - no-one attended all four.

OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER

12. The Operational Risk Register is annexed to the report. There have been no changes to the residual risk score since quarter 1.